

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

Retold by Ardith Davis Cole

Once upon a time there were three little pigs who lived together with their mother in the home where they were born. From dusk to dawn the brothers played together, until the day came when their mother said to them, "Little pigs, you are not so little anymore. It is time for you to go out into the world and seek your fortunes."

The three were excited about the possibilities before them. "We'll travel the world!" shouted the First Little Pig.

"I'll find a wife!" exclaimed the second pig.

But the third and more sensible pig reminded, "Not so fast. We have to first put a roof over our heads. We must build a home where we will be safe, where we can stay warm when it's cold, and where we can raise a family."

"He's right," grumbled the dejected first pig. "Let's get started so we can investigate the more interesting aspects of life."

So, each pig set forth, intent on the goal of building his own house. The first pig was finished quickly, for he built his house from bales of straw he had purchased from a nearby farmer. The Second Little Pig finished shortly after the first, for he had built his shelter of sticks, most of which he'd gathered from the neighborhood, as well as the woods. Both pigs were proud of their efficient ingenuity and were very pleased that they would soon be able to engage in the more exciting facets of life.

However, the Third Little Pig developed a different plan. He decided to build his house out of bricks. He wanted a house that would last forever, one that would keep him safe from any harm. Bricks would make a mighty fortress, he thought. Unfortunately, this would not be an easy task. Each small brick would have to be shaped and dried. Furthermore, it would take considerable effort and time to lay all of them once they were ready. But, the third pig was determined, and brick by brick his house took shape.

Sometimes his brothers went to watch their industrious sibling work. Pig 3 enjoyed their company, but he did not enjoy their teasing. "Think he'll be done by the time he's old and gray?" joshed Pig 2.

"Nah!" responded Pig 1. "It'll take a lifetime." Then, they'd roll on the ground laughing.

Next, they'd try to dissuade Pig 3's intentions. "Come on, Pig 3," nudged Pig 1, "just use straw to finish it. You're making it difficult when it could be so easy." But, the third pig was adamant and continued on, brick by brick. Eventually, he did finish.

It so happened that one day, not long after Pig 3 had completed his project, Pig 1 had a visitor. The First Little Pig heard a knock on the door, so he glanced out the window to see who it was. "Oh, no!" he gasped. "A wolf!" Trying to put off the seemingly inevitable, Pig 1 asked in a polite voice, "Who's there?"

The wolf also disguised his voice and answered, "It is I, your kind neighbor."

Unable to contain himself, the little pig shouted, "You're not my neighbor! You are a wolf! Go away!"

However, the wolf would not be thwarted, but instead continued, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"Not by the hairs on my chinny-chin-chin," stuttered Pig 1.

"Then I'll huff, and I'll puff, and I'll BLOW your house in!" And, that mean old wolf did exactly as he said he would do. Of course it did not take long to level a straw house.

Fortunately for Pig 1, he had dashed out the back door just in time, and he ran as fast as his little pig legs would carry him to the house of Pig 2. He darted through the front door, bolting it behind him. Pig 2 was startled by Pig 1's behavior, and responded accordingly, "What's going on, for goodness' sake?"

"It-It-It's the wolf," stammered Pig 1, out of breath. "He blew my house down!" The words no sooner left his lips than there came a boisterous pounding at the bolted door.

"Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in!" demanded the wolf.

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS (CONTINUED)

The two pigs hugged each other, and with trembling voices replied in unison, “Not by the hairs on our chinny-chin-chins.”

“Then I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house in!” declared the wolf. The pigs did not wait to see what might happen, but instead dashed out the back door and headed as fast as their pig legs could carry them to the third brother’s home.

After the wolf had huffed and puffed and puffed and huffed enough to bring down the stick house, he discovered his predetermined dinner was gone. Thus, his temper was raging when he vowed, “I’ll have piggy pie for supper yet. They’ll not escape this next time.”

Meanwhile, Pig 1 and Pig 2 ran into the arms of their brother, who was stunned, but sympathetic. Out of breath and sobbing, they implored Pig 3 to bolt the door and secure the house, for the wolf was on their trail. Calmly, Pig 3 replied, “Sit down in my nice soft chairs, brothers. I’ll take care of this bothersome lout.” With that, he picked up a large kettle of water and placed it over the flame in the fireplace.

All too soon, there came a most disruptive banging on the door, followed by, “Little pigs, little pigs, let me come in.”

Huddled together, the three pigs sang out at the top of their lungs, “Not by the hairs on our chinny-chin-chins!”

“Then I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house in!” roared the wolf.

“Oh, no, you won’t blow a brick house over, Mr. Wolf! There is no way for you to get into this house except for the chimney—and it is too high,” the third pig called deceptively.

So the wolf huffed and puffed until he was all out of breath, but he just could not move one brick in Pig 3’s house. But then, he remembered!

“Ha!” responded the wolf under his breath. “They think I can’t get up there. Just watch.” With that, the wolf pulled a ladder—a leftover remnant from building the house—over to the far wall, positioned it carefully, and began his journey upward. With a hungry smile on his face, the conniving canine entered the chimney. Down he went, down, down, down . . . right into a large kettle of boiling water. Splash!

“Yow!” he screamed, and flew straight back up the chimney. He skipped the ladder and rolled to the ground, vowing never to approach that family of pigs again. And, the last the pigs saw of the wolf were his soggy footprints heading in the direction of the animal burn clinic.

PROMPTS:

- Why were the houses of Pig 1 and Pig 2 so weak? Be sure to use information from the text in your response.
- The three pigs were brothers, but they had different personalities. Describe the personality of each pig. Tell which one you’d like to have as a friend and why you chose that one.